

Jim Sides
Board Chairman



William Peoples
Vice-Chairman

ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The Rowan County Board of Social Services will improve the quality of life in Rowan County by supporting the Mission of the Department of Social Services. Toward this end and in cooperation with public and private entities, we will identify needs, and devise and focus resources to deliver services responsively and compassionately.

MONTHLY MEETING Department of Social Services Rowan County DSS April 28, 2015 @ 5:30 PM

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Review of Mission Statement
3. Invocation
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Additions to Agenda
6. Deletions to Agenda
7. Approval of Agenda
8. Approval of Minutes
 - a. DSS Board Minutes March 2015
9. Comments from the Community
10. Approval of Reports
 - a. Child Support Division Report
 - b. Economic Services Division Report
 - c. Finance Division Board Report
 - d. Fiscal Board Report
 - e. Social Work Services Division Report
 - f. Data Dashboards
 - g. Director's Report

- h. Agency Calendar
- i. Foster Parent Newsletter

- 11. Role of a Child Support Agent
- 12. In-depth review of Child Support Dashboard
- 13. Adjourn

Note: Any person who needs an accommodation in order to participate in the meeting should contact Kelley Williams (704.216.8400) at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

ITEM TITLE: DSS Board Minutes March 2015

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
DSS Board Minutes March 2015	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

**Rowan County
Board of Social Services
March 24, 2015
Minutes**

The Rowan County Board of Social Services met Tuesday, March 24, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the large meeting room at 1813 East Innes Street, Salisbury, NC.

MEMBERS:

Jim Sides, Chairman
Arnold Chamberlain
DeeDee Wright

Members William Peoples and Ethel Bamberg-Revis were unable to be present.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Donna Fayko, Kelly Johnson, Pat Spears, Robert Lester, Rebecca Smith, Sheila Holshouser, Donna Beaver, Josh Bergeron, Alexis Soloman

PROCEEDINGS:

1. Call to Order: Chairman Sides called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Review of Mission Statement: Mr. Sides read the Mission Statement.
3. Invocation: Mr. Chamberlain had the opening prayer.
4. Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Chamberlain led the Pledge.
5. Additions to Agenda: Chairman Sides requested to move item 13, Role of an Income Maintenance Caseworker to item 10a. There will be a recognition added to the agenda as item 10b.
6. Deletions to Agenda: None
7. Approval of Agenda: **Ms. Wright moved approval of the Agenda as amended. Mr. Chamberlain seconded, and the motion passed with all in favor.**
8. Approval of Minutes: **Ms. Wright moved approval of the Minutes of the February 2015 meeting. Mr. Chamberlain seconded, and the motion passed with all in favor.**
9. Comments from the Community: None.
10. Approval of Reports: Chairman Sides called for comments on the Reports.
 - a. **Child Support Division Report**: None
 - b. **Economic Services Division Report**: Referencing the 180 households denied for LIEAP assistance, Ms. Wright asked if more denials were expected. Ms. Spears explained that reports are received daily, and 180 was the total as of the date the report was prepared. It

was noteworthy that in three months only 180 households were denied. Ms. Wright commended Ms. Spears on the good comments she made regarding her staff.

- c. **Finance Division:** Mr. Sides noted there have been 37 resignations and 38 new hires. If one looks at the total number of permanent positions, there has been little change, but the workload of the agency has changed drastically over the last few years. When the budget is reviewed later in the meeting, there are provisions for new employees in the coming fiscal year.
- d. **Social Work Services:** Mr. Sides noted that the Adult Services workload was going to increase due to guardianship cases. Ms. Fayko advised there is a request in the budget for an additional Social Worker to assist with the increase in cases. Mr. Sides pointed out guardianship is a mandated service for DSS.
- e. **Data Dashboards:** None. It was noted the Board would be looking at Economic Services Dashboards as an agenda item later in the meeting.
- f. **Director's Report:** Ms. Fayko advised that some of the components of the Governor's budget will be mirrored in the DSS budget. Mr. Sides noted the \$9.7 million reduction to the County's Special Assistance, and asked how that would affect Rowan County. Ms. Fayko responded that we are seeing a reduction in the need for those funds and services. Some of the elderly population are no longer applying for this service, some have expired, and others have made alternate living arrangements.

Mr. Sides called for a motion to approve all reports as presented. **Mr. Chamberlain moved approval of the reports. Ms. Wright seconded, and the motion carried with all in favor.**

10a. Role of Income Maintenance Caseworker: Donna Beaver, IMC III, presented information about her job within the agency. Income Caseworker III's take and process applications for Adult Medicaid, Long Term Care coverage, CAP (Community Alternatives Program), Special Assistance, PACE, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), and Family and Children's Medicaid. They are responsible for extensive knowledge of all of these programs.

Applications are taken on a rotating basis each day. Workers may have a face to face interview with the customer, they may process a mail-in application, or they may process an on-line application. Each worker processes 3 to 7 applications daily. Each initial intake may take 30 minutes to 3 hours to process, depending on the nature of the application and functionality of NC FAST. After the initial intake, it can take up to 8 hours to process one application, depending on the program.

In addition to taking applications, each worker has an active caseload of 350-400 cases. Case maintenance includes yearly reviews, changes in coverage from long-term care coverage to private insurance, address changes, doctor changes, changes in employment, etc. Each month there are 20-50 Medicaid reviews to complete and 10 FNS reviews to complete.

Most workers are behind on completing applications and reviews timely. This is an unusual circumstance for this division. They have always met State standards in the past.

Beginning April 1st, the Adult Medicaid division will be separated into two groups. One group will process applications, and the other will handle case maintenance. We are hopeful this will assist in getting the work load current.

The biggest frustration workers deal with is problems encountered with the NCFAS program. Even though functionality has improved, it is still a difficult system to navigate. Sometimes the system runs so slowly that it is difficult to get anything done. The system does not work consistently. Some days it works well, and others it does not.

Another frustration for workers is the volume of work. More people in our county need assistance. Many of the clients in the Adult Medicaid area are elderly, and require more attention. The Adult Medicaid staff has decreased from 16 workers to 12 workers, and the work load has increased due to staff turnover. It was noted the decrease in workers is due to re-classification of workers due to the Family and Children's Medicaid backlog. The caseloads for Family and Children's Medicaid are 600-700 cases.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Sides expressed appreciation for the job workers are doing and asked that Ms. Beaver relay the Board's thanks to her co-workers.

10b. Special Recognition: The Board recognized Pat Spears, Economic Services Program Administrator, on her retirement. Ms. Spears has served the Department of Social Services and the citizens of Rowan County for 28 years. She was presented a framed certificate from the Board members who offered congratulatory remarks. Ms. Spears will be greatly missed.

11. Budget Presentation for Fiscal Year 2016: Budget Analyst, Kelly Johnson, distributed a packet of information containing an overview and highlights to the budget.

The first page of the packet was 2014-2015 *Actuals Compared to FY '16 Estimates*. These were actual dollars received this year for mandated services. These figures also represent capped funding. Estimates are received from the State and will fluctuate throughout the year as funding authorizations are received. The total decrease in funding is \$60,262. The majority comes from Daycare Direct Payments.

Highlights from line items in the budget were explained. Ms. Johnson pointed out items of interest or items of significant change. Last month the Board was informed of Northwoods expansion into Children's Services and Adult Services. Those funds must be provided "up front," and the project cost is \$302,000. Those costs are located in several different line items and are highlighted: Professional Services and Service & Maintenance - reimbursable and non-reimbursable totals for each. It is important to note that we continue to contract with Maximus, which allows us to upload our 1571 for reimbursement. We have been advised by the Division to carry Service and Maintenance for Maximus as well as the State charging us a fee for the upfit project to apply Maximus.

F/A (Fixed Assets) DP Equipment: We have budgeted for Northwoods software and associated equipment. In addition, we are requesting 78 desktops and 8 laptops. The State mandates that a computer's useful life is 5 years. IT has computer equipment on a replacement cycle for us. Included in this amount is a pending budget amendment for \$17,000. Should the County Manager not approve the budget amendment, we have it included in the budget for the next fiscal year.

Last year, Ms. Johnson condensed the salary and fringes to correspond with six divisions, and changed the ledger format. Divisions are: 5310 Administration

5320	Adult Services
5350	Children's Services
5373	Child Support
5380	Economic Services
5550	HCCBG

5373, Child Support: Paternity testing decreased by \$5,000 and IV-D Cooperative Agreement decreased by \$9,800. Last year, we had to start paying the Clerk of Court filing fees for filing complaints and motions. We did not know an exact amount to budget that first year. Now that we have paid these fees for more than a year, we can now budget a more accurate amount for filing fees, which is reflected in the decrease to IV-D Cooperative Agreement.

5380, Economic Services, Salaries Part-time: As the Sustainability Plan was developed, there was discussion about the need for full-time positions rather than hiring temps to work the Medicaid and FNS program. This line item now reflects for 7 temps to work the LIEAP program that runs from December to March. We receive Administrative funds from the State to cover their salary at 100%. We are seeing growth in this program. The change in HR policy and law regarding the number of hours that a part-time employee can work before an agency has to pay for their insurance has drastically impacted the ability to run the program with 4 temps. Thus, we request 7 workers to effectively manage this program next year.

5380, Economic Services, Bank Fees: There is a decrease of \$3,000 in this line item because we are spending less to collect verifications from the bank as the workers now have a program within NC FAST where they can view this information on line.

5395, Adult Services, General Assistance: Normally we budget \$4,000 in this line. The bulk of these funds are spent for unclaimed bodies. This year, there is an increase of \$85,000 to this line item. As discussed at last month's Board meeting, if the courts award guardianship to DSS, we are legally responsible for the care of those wards. DSS is mandated to take care of their needs, including food, medications, housing, etc. We have two adult wards, with no income or resources, that may need this assistance in the coming year. Ms. Johnson checked with the Division of Aging and Adult Services to see if there is any other funding available to assist with care of wards, and there is not. Ms. Fayko explained there are certain categories of wards that cannot receive any type of public assistance (an undocumented national, for example). We are totally responsible for their care. We have been fortunate to network with community partners to obtain mental health services, but the "free of charge" services are time limited. Their family is currently providing shelter, but that could change. Mr. Sides advised to make sure all this information is known when the budget is presented. When commissioners see an area of large increase, there will be questions. They need to know this is a mandated service that we have to provide. We would be remiss not to budget, and we have no idea how many wards we may have that fall into one of these categories and DSS is required to provide entirely for their care.

Ms. Wright asked how the amount was determined. Ms. Fayko explained that we budgeted for rent, estimations for mental health services, medication, food, utilities and projected it out for two wards.

Ms. Fayko advised that if the money is not spent by the end of the fiscal year, it will revert back into the County fund balance.

5425, IV-E, Foster Care (Board) Payments: We have decreased this line item by \$125,000 because of the work being done in Children's Services to place youth in foster family settings rather than facility placements.

5450, Special Assistance-Elderly and Disabled: There is a decrease in the Governor's budget that is reflected in our budget for these two line items as a decline is being seen in this population. Each line was decreased by \$20,000.

5400, HCCBG: There are two expense lines, Adult Day Care and In-Home Aide. We also pay salary and fringes out of this division.

Referencing the "pink box" on page 5, Ms. Johnson explained that the current budget is \$22.1 million, which shows an increase of \$407,000 for FY 15-16. The increase is due to the Northwoods request and salary increases, etc. In looking at actuals versus estimates, we have received new funding in Child Welfare. When revenues increase, there is a corresponding increase in expenditures, which in this case was salaries. The cost of the Northwoods project is included, at a total cost of \$302,000, and reimbursement of \$102,000. The net cost for the Northwoods project is \$199,000. It was noted that the \$27,000 budget amendment that was mentioned earlier in the meeting is also included in this budget, and that amount may come out of the current year budget.

There are two noteworthy decreases in expenditures: IV-E Foster Care payments decreased by \$125,000 due to resource family placements rather than residential type placements. Also, Special Assistance to the Aged and Disabled decreased \$20,000 in line with the Governor's budget adjustment for this population.

Total expenditures: \$22.6 million, current is \$22.1 million, reflecting an increase of \$407,121.

Noted increases in Revenue: There are new funding sources: CPS caseload Reduction \$52,419, Child Welfare In-Home Expansion \$77,919, Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) \$52,628 and CPS State \$121,637. Medicaid Assistance is a large revenue source for DSS. In the current year, we budgeted \$1.3 million for Medicaid Assistance. In December, we prepared a sustainability plan and projected revenues for Medicaid. This projection, added to the original budget amount will bring the revised budget total to \$1.8 million. Last week, Ms. Johnson projected \$1.9 million YTD revenue, and we expect to draw down more. The 15-16 budget amounts for Medicaid Assistance are \$2.6 million, which is an increase of \$695,000 compared to current fiscal year. Ms. Johnson remarked that in last year's budget we were very conservative in budgeting the enhanced Medicaid rate as we did not have a firm confirmation of receiving this reimbursement during the budget season. However, we now know this enhanced rate is recurring and in this year's budget, we are able to code time for the Medicaid workers to project actuals more accurately.

Mr. Sides advised it is important to point out to Commissioners that DSS is doing more as an agency than we have ever done – more benefits to more people than ever – and, we are doing it next year with less tax dollars.

Total revenues: \$15.4 million, reflecting an increase of \$979,663 due to new revenue sources in Child Welfare and the 75% Medicaid drawdown.

The 1047 is a budget summary that shows local budget numbers and the flow through budget. Ms. Johnson pointed out that TANF, Medicaid, Medicaid Transportation, and Food Stamps are benefits administered that do not run through our local budget. It does have a fiscal impact on Rowan County. Line 63 shows the amount of assistance issued that impacts Rowan County. The grand total expenditures are \$245,942,371, and the grand total County appropriation is \$7.1 million.

The 1047 Expansion summary shows the same information with the inclusion of the new requested positions, which increases the County appropriation to \$7.3 million.

In looking at the Comparison of County Funds handout, it was important to note that even with the seven requested reclassifications and nine new positions we are still under the initial budget from the current year.

12. In-depth review of Economic Services Dashboard: New Economic Services Program Manager, Sheila Holshouser, was introduced. Ms. Spears explained that these dashboards are a little different from the dashboards of the other divisions in that they provide statistical data, but very little information on outcomes.

Medicaid Applications shows the number of applications that have been received, approved, and denied/withdrawn. This details how applications are disposed. We track Medicaid Reviews and Terminations because that affects the overall statistics of people receiving services.

Total Medicaid Costs and Total Medicaid Recipients contain data that comes from the NC FAST system. Information coming from the NC FAST system is improving and becoming more accurate. Medicaid Transportation Costs and Cost per Recipient are the costs associated with providing transportation for Medicaid recipients to medical appointments and treatment centers. Cost for providing this service ranges from \$130-\$160 per person per month. We do receive reimbursement from the State for this service.

FNS Applications, like Medicaid Applications, show the statistical information on applications received, approved, and denied/withdrawn. FNS Benefits Issued represents the money coming back into the local economy to purchase food.

FNS Recipients and Active Cases provide information on the number of recipients and the active cases. Active cases represent households, and there may be many recipients in one case/household.

FNS Reviews shows the number of reviews completed, and the recipient was found to be eligible to continue receiving benefits. Terminations are the recipients that completed a review and are no longer eligible or recipients who did not complete a recertification and the case was closed.

Day Care and Work First dashboards were presented by Ms. Holshouser, who now supervises that division. Ms. Holshouser explained that every year we receive an allocation for Day Care Services. The first dashboard shows where we are in spending our allocation. The second

dashboard is the total number of children served with daycare assistance each month. It was pointed out that if the allocation is not enough for the year, services will be decreased. We have just decreased the number of applications we accept. Work First Benefits: The “green graph” shows the monthly amount spent, and the “blue graph” shows the number of recipients.

Mr. Sides asked if we are drug testing for work first recipients. We are not at this time. Ms. Fayko advised details are being worked out at this time. We expect to receive policy in June. We have received notification that there will be no cost to counties for implementation when testing starts.

Ms. Spears explained that we use the data collected to look at the economic impact these services have on Rowan County. FNS benefits are issued to recipients who shop for groceries in Rowan County. Although a lot is issued in benefits, the dollars come back into the local economy. The same is true for Medicaid. There is a yearly report that shows how many Medicaid dollars were spent, and the majority of recipients see providers in Rowan County. Likewise, the Day Care subsidy goes to pay providers in Rowan County. Losing programs would be like losing a top employer in the County in terms of economic impact. Ms. Spears advised the dashboards capture what we do, but not how well we do it. It does not show how Rowan County meets State standards for timeliness and accuracy.

13. Other Matters: Ms. Fayko invited Board members to attend the Bridges out of Poverty simulation event which will be held on April 13 at 1:00 p.m. at St. John’s Lutheran Church.

14. Adjourn: **There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Chamberlain moved to adjourn. Ms. Wright seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.**

Minutes prepared by:
Kelley Williams

Signed Date

Secretary Date

ITEM TITLE: Child Support Division Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Child Support Division Report	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

Child Support Division Report
April 2015
Robert Lester, Attorney and Program Administrator

NC Child Support reports the following incentive statistics for Rowan County as of 03/31/2015: Cases Under Order 88.54%; Paternity Establishment 94.90%; Collection Rate 67.12%; and Cases with Payment to Arrears 66.38%. Rowan County Child Support's collections for the month of March 2015 totaled an ***ASTOUNDING \$1,047,692.00***.

The month of March proved more active than usual for members of the child support staff.

The establishment and interstate units were allowed a "shut down day" on March 20th. This allows agents to concentrate solely on working reports which assist with case clean up, the establishment of paternity and current support, and collections. Although agents are not required to meet with child support clientele on the "shut down day", this in no way impedes services, as a coverage plan is implemented well in advance.

On March 25th, the Establishment and Interstate Units conducted a Paternity/Voluntary Support Agreement Day. A mass mailing invited non-custodial parents to come to the office on March 25th any time between the hours of 7:00 am and 7:00 pm to resolve their child support case. The mailing was sent to eligible non-custodial parents with pending court action. The numerical results were:

- 51 people were invited to participate – at least 7 were female
- 23 people responded or appeared, a response rate of 45%
- No one arrived at 7AM or during the last hour; most appeared during the afternoon
- Only 6 parties resolved their cases; several provided useful information
- Paternity Orders (consent)/paternity acknowledgments – 3
- Paternity tests – 4
- Voluntary dismissals – 3
- Case resolved previously – 1
- Declined to resolve case – 4
- The remaining 8 cases were not addressed as custody cases were pending or appointments were rescheduled

This was one of the better responses in recent times but remaining available until 7PM was not productive. We plan to continue offering this opportunity quarterly because, even if we yield fairly low resolution numbers, we often obtain useful information to eventually conclude cases.

Beth Berry and Karen Bost attended the Supervisor's Conference April 7th-8th in Raleigh, NC. This year's guest speaker was Lisa Johnson. Ms. Johnson is a Program Analyst with the Division of Performance and Statistical Analysis, Office of Child Support Enforcement, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. She has over 22 years of experience in child support. She processes the state incentives earned each year based on performance and audit results. Ms. Johnson spoke to Supervisors about the 3 reports the Federal Government applies when determining state incentives. The OCSE 157 report factors together case and statistical information which is reported to Congress. This report is used by all the states to report statistical information and some financial information on their child support program to the Federal Department of Health and Human Services. Mrs. Johnson conducted an in-depth review of performance indicators. In addition to Ms. Johnson, Lisa Bradley and Ben Kull, attorneys with the AG's office, were also present. They provided updates regarding different bills pending before the legislature and case law updates.

On April 29th, three members of the child support staff will be attending NC FAST training in Morganton, NC. This training is specifically designed for child support workers.

ITEM TITLE: Economic Services Division Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Economic Services Division Report	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

Economic Services Division Report
Sheila Holshouser, Program Manager
April 2015

Energy - Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP):

The LIEAP program began in December, 2014 for a designated population of Rowan County. In January, 2015, the program was opened to the public and ended on March 31, 2015. During this time, Rowan DSS was able to assist 1,930 families with their energy cost. The total expenditure was \$548,100 in LIEAP benefits. Only 213 families were denied in the program due to not meeting eligibility requirements. These benefits were paid directly to the vendors, such as Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas, etc. All of the applications have been processed and the program has been closed for the current fiscal year. Temporary staff members were hired to work in this program, with assistance from the IM Technicians and Office Assistant III from the Administrative Support Unit. The county received \$779,722 in LIEAP funds for this year.

Medicaid:

The deadline for completing the backlog of Medicaid re-certifications has been extended by the State. On April 22, 2015, those cases that have not yet been reviewed will be extended for another month. As of March 30, 2015, Rowan DSS had a total of 8464 Medicaid re-certifications to complete during April. This number has been reduced to 7053 as of April 20, 2015. With the use of the overtime for the caseworkers and temporary staff, the cases are being worked as quickly as possible with the resources that are available.

Food and Nutrition Services (FNS):

The overdue cases in FNS have been decreasing with the use of our temporary staff that was hired in early 2015. There are two designated temporary staff to work solo on the FNS reviews. The applications that are overdue continue to decrease as well. Since April 1st, the caseworkers have been working diligently to achieve small goals. One of the goals was met in regard to FNS expedited applications. The State standard for this application is 100% timeliness for processing. This goal has been met effective April 17th and it is monitored closely on a daily basis. FNS will also be involved in a State management evaluation during the month of April. These results will be reported when available.

Work First and Day Care:

A new supervisor for this program has been selected. Mrs. Felicia Walker began her duties on April 12, 2015. Felicia has served as the Social Worker II lead worker for the daycare unit since April, 2015. She was also the lead worker for this unit from April 2010 until June, 2012. Experience was gained as a Social Worker I in the daycare unit from June, 2008 until April, 2010. Felicia also has experience in the Adult Medicaid area from another county prior to working in Rowan. She has been cross-trained in some of the Work First areas. She has stated that she wants to learn all of the areas of which she supervises and looks forward to the new challenges coming in the future with NC Fast.

ITEM TITLE: Finance Division Board Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Finance Board Report	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

Fiscal Division Report
Kelly Johnson, Budget Analyst
April 2015

Budget

As of the end of March with 75% of the fiscal year gone by, we have spent 64% of our budgeted expenditures and received 62% of our revenues. (Revenues do not come in until one or two months after the expenditures are recorded and reported.) We have used 68% of our county funds, which will be lower when all of our revenues are received for March.

A meeting was held with the County Manager and Assistant Finance Director on April 10 to discuss budgeted needs and requests. County Manager Aaron Church, asked questions about many of our line items and discussions were made regarding his suggestions to change figures within the lines. In the expenditure budget, Mr. Church increased and decreased line items and in the revenue budget, he decreased line items. Mr. Church approved the Northwoods project for Social Work Services but did not approve all requested positions. All information and numbers discussed in this meeting are tentative and subject to change once Mr. Church conducts a final review of all county departments' budgets. Mr. Church has afforded us the opportunity to meet again before he submits his County Manager's Budget Recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. We appreciate Mr. Church allowing us to provide input to help clarify budgeted figures as data, tracking budget trends and decision making is included in every line item. The chart below breaks down budgeted expenditures, revenues and county funds requested compared to the current fiscal year and shows the amounts DSS requested and the changes that Mr. Church has recommended thus far. These numbers do not include re-classes or new positions requested.

DSS Request	Expenditures	Revenues	County Funds
FY 15-16	22,603,621	15,404,039	7,199,582
FY 14-15	22,196,500	14,424,376	7,772,124
Difference	407,121	979,663	(572,542)
County Manager Changes			
FY 15-16	22,495,922	14,858,515	7,637,407
FY 14-15	22,196,500	14,424,376	7,772,124
Difference	299,422	434,139	(134,717)

In looking at the Difference line above, please note the following comparison between the requested amount and changes made. Expenditures decreased by 107,699, revenues decreased by 545,524 and county funds decreased by 437,825.

County Reimbursement Uplift Project Update

Jack Rogers, DHHS Deputy Director, provided a small update during the April Fiscal call. Mr. Rogers stated they have received the purchase agreement from Maximus and Mr. Rogers has requested a data dictionary for TEC and QUIC, an updated source code manual and the help desk call log from Maximus. The Local Business Liaisons have provided Mr. Rogers a list of counties they have recommended as test sites and our LBL did recommend Rowan County. Counties have not been contacted to date. Also, Mr. Rogers advised they will provide webinars so counties can be involved and updated.

ITEM TITLE: Fiscal Board Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Fiscal Board Report	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

ADMINISTRATION**March 2015**

EXPENDITURES SUMMARY	BUDGET APPROPRIATION	SPENT YEAR TO DATE	NO. OF MONTHS REMAINING	PERCENTAGE PROJECTION
Services, Programs, Staff & Operating Costs	13,295,743	8,869,839.31	3	
County Funds (General Assistance, Drug Screening)	40,400	24,684.94	3	
Child Day Care Payments	4,014,264	2,706,868.40	4	
Public Assistance				
Adoption Assistance IV-B	135,600	67,840.25	3	
Adoption Assistance IV-E	190,600	124,167.45	3	
State Foster Home Program	1,174,032	336,056.11	4	
IV-E Foster Care	1,345,337	628,423.21	4	
Assistance to the Blind	5,600	4,960.00	0	
Crisis Intervention and Low Income Energy	1,302,017	1,043,021.75	3	
Medicaid	10,500	(482.11)	3	
S/C Special Assistance-Aged	478,414	305,568.00	3	
S/C Special Assistance-Disabled	499,982	335,859.37	3	
Work First-Emergency Assistance	9,000	-	3	
Work First Assistance Payments	5,000	543.00	3	
Home and Community Care Block Grant				
Administrative/Staff Costs	48,832	24,832.29	3	
Adult Day Care Contract	44,100	23,085.58	4	
In-Home Aide Contract	146,793	84,747.34	4	
Grand Total	22,746,214	14,580,014.89	3	85%

CHANGES TO BUDGET FROM PREVIOUS MONTH	Account	Increase	Decrease
Foster Care Caseworker Visits	101-5349-444-xx-xx	7,717	
Office Setup for new CPS Social Worker position	101-5310-444-xx-xx	3,884	
Total Increases/Decreases		11,601	

PERSONNEL CHANGES	YEAR TO DATE	
Number of permanent positions	205	
Number of promotions	1	17
Number of demotions	0	3
Number of new hires	5	43
Number of lateral transfers	1	3
Number of resignations	4	41

ITEM TITLE: Social Work Services Division Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Social Work Services Division Report	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

**Social Work Services Division
Rebecca Smith, Program Administrator
April 2015**

Adult Services

According to Social Work Supervisor Daina Frederick, Rowan County Department of Social Services (RCDSS) received our Monitoring Report for the Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) monitoring held on January 27, 2015. Eleven (11) In Home Aide client files and nine (9) Adult Day Care (ADC)/Adult Day Health (ADH) client files were reviewed for eligibility, completion, accuracy, compliance with service plan and service units. There were no instances of noncompliance found in any of the records reviewed. Adult Services social workers were commended for well organized files, contact notes being detailed, and reviews being performed timely. We were also commended for adapting to the revised eligibility documentation standards for ADC/ADH and having the appropriate medical examination form in the appropriate files.

We also received our Third Quarter County Oversight Report for our Adult Home Specialist. All reports were complete and there were no concerns/issues identified for the third quarter.

We are happy to report we have no pending guardianship hearings for the first time in a long time. We were also recently successful in transferring guardianship to a family member in one case. We have identified two additional cases where competency may be able to be restored and/or transferred; therefore, motions to the court will be filed.

The In Home Aide Program is extremely important. This is one example of how a caregiver visiting an elderly/disabled adult's home can make the difference between life and death. On March 23rd, the caregiver went to the adult's home to provide routine services. The caregiver immediately noticed an odor and started getting a headache. She thought it might be from leaking gas. She called the gas company. They came out, did testing, and found out there was a high level of carbon monoxide in the home. The caregiver got the client out of the house and stayed with the client until the home was cleared for re-entry. If the caregiver had not gone in to provide services that day, the client would have probably fallen asleep and not woken up. That same day the social worker ensured the client had two working carbon monoxide detectors installed in her home.

Children's Services

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Several events have been planned to bring awareness to this important month. The children in our Celebrating Families program planted blue pinwheels in our planter boxes at RCDSS. On April 21st, we hosted a community event in partnership with Prevent Child Abuse Rowan. At the event, Rowan County citizens were able to access important information regarding services offered in the community and a short presentation was given on prescription drug abuse and its impact on children. The Center for Prevention Services, who recently obtained a grant to offer preventative and educational services regarding this topic, will be our guest speakers.

The next round of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) was announced via a Dear County Director Letter in November 2014. A Webinar "North Carolina and Round 3 of the CFSR: What Agencies Need to Know" was held on April 8, 2015. Rowan County has not been selected to participate in the federal audit. Nonetheless, the outcomes from the review will impact the entire state. North Carolina has been approved to conduct a state-directed case review to fulfill the Quality Case Review (CQR) component of the review. The counties participating in the review have adopted and are implementing the core components of a functioning Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system that addresses:

- Administrative structure to support outcome focused work
- The collection of quality data
- QCR process that uses the Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and case related interviews
- The analysis and dissemination of quality data that informs the development of solutions
- The implementation of lessons learned with oversight and monitoring that reinforces intern and external engagement at the state and local level.

RCDSS adopted an internal CQI protocol last fiscal year. We are continuing to build on to the process to ultimately meet all of the above criteria for the purpose of ensuring we are adequately self-assessing our strengths and challenges to inform our strategic planning and leadership initiatives. Thus far, we have not used the federal Onsite Review Instrument in our case reviews and this will be an identified area of growth as we continue to work toward being outcome focused. As the Webinar pointed out, North Carolina will most likely have a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) as a result of the CFSR to improve our performance on child outcome and systemic measures. There is a need for a strong state-county partnership to develop and carry out the PIP.

ITEM TITLE: Data Dashboards

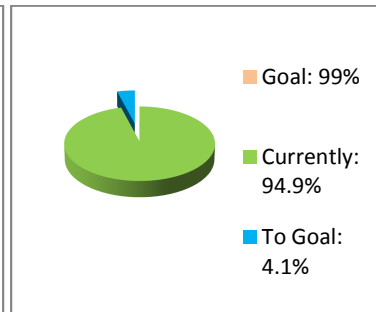
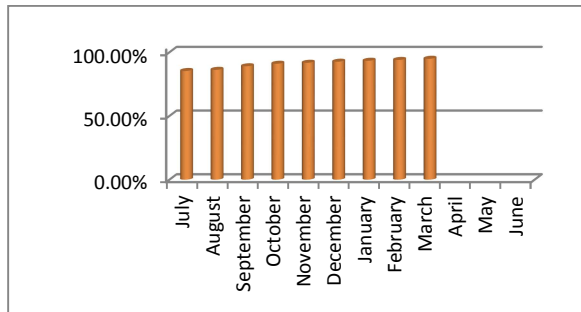
ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Child Support Dashboard	4/23/2015	Cover Memo
Economic Services Dashboard	4/23/2015	Cover Memo
Social Work Services Dashboard	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

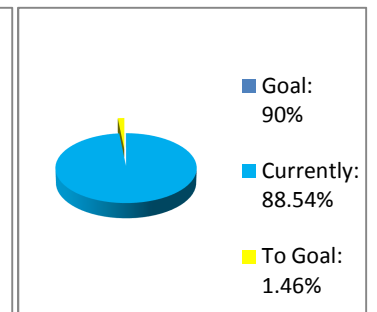
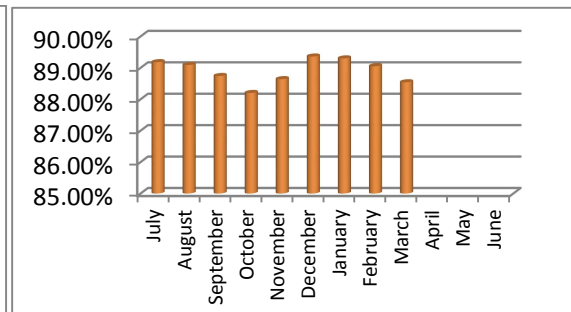
Child Support Data Dashboard

Child Support Incentive Goals

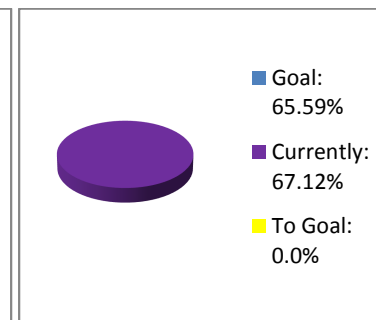
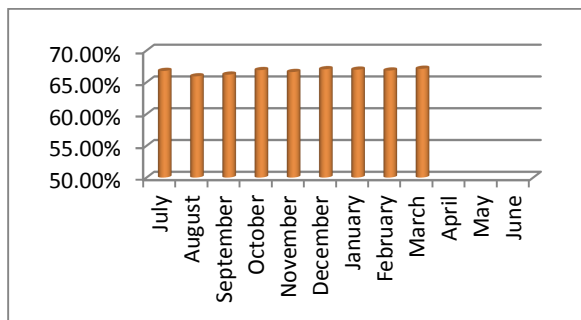
Paternity Establishment – Goal 99%



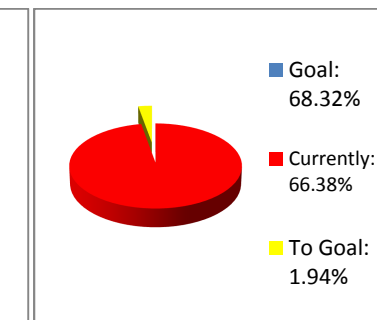
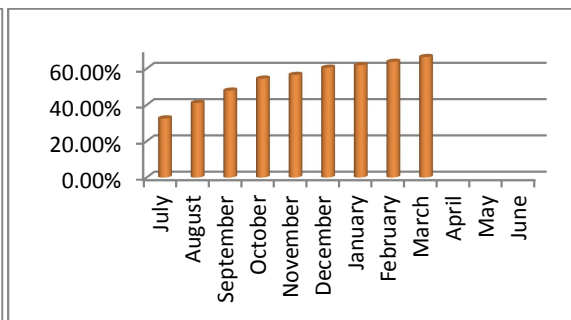
Cases Under Order – Goal 90%



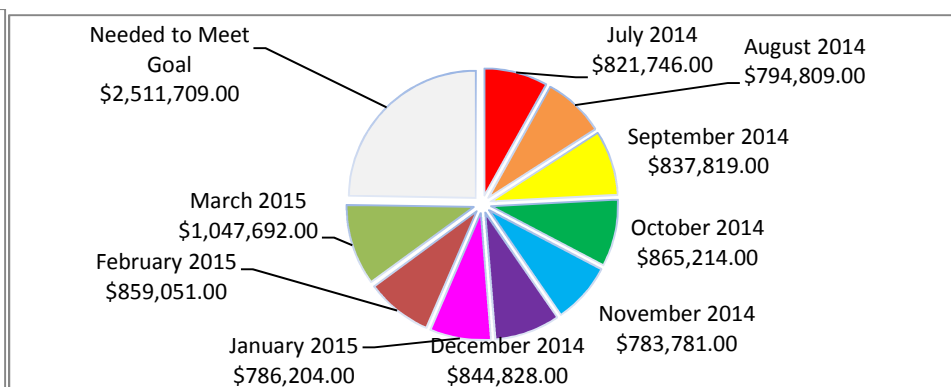
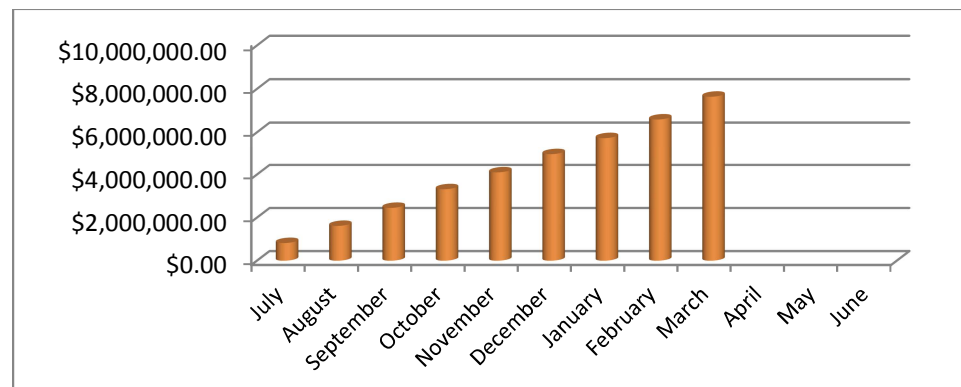
Collection Rate – Goal 65.59%



Cases with Payments to Arrears – Goal 68.32%

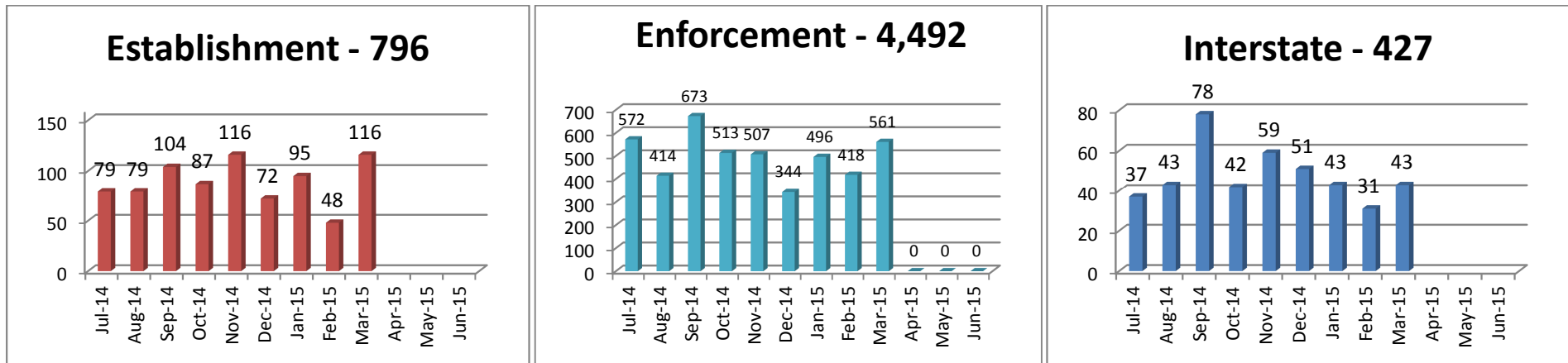


Total Collections – Goal \$10,152,853



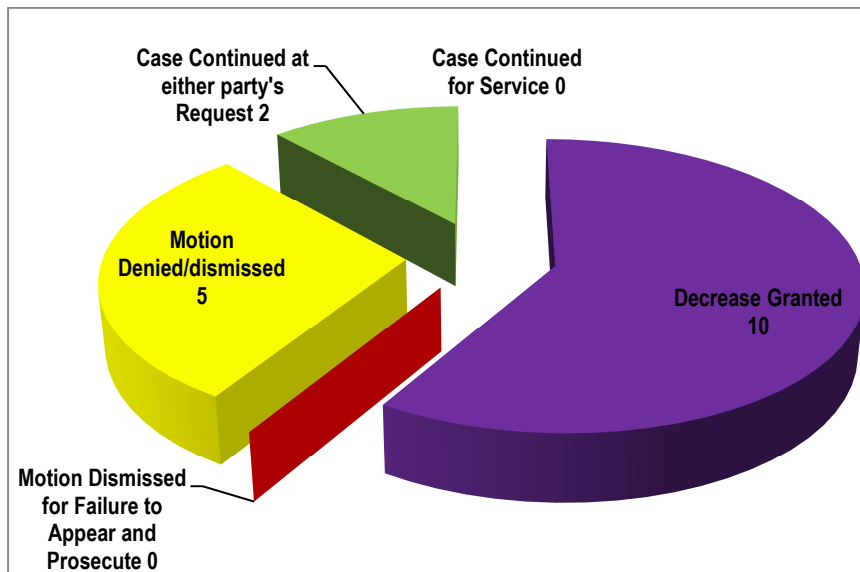
Child Support Data Dashboard

Number of Cases in Court – YTD Total – 5,715

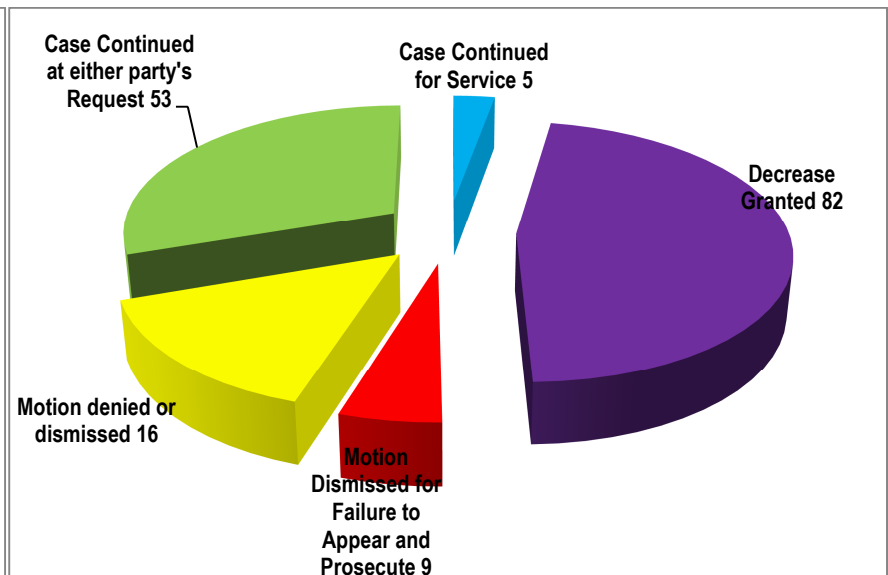


Non-Custodial Parents Requesting Decreases

March 2015 – 17 Decreases Requested

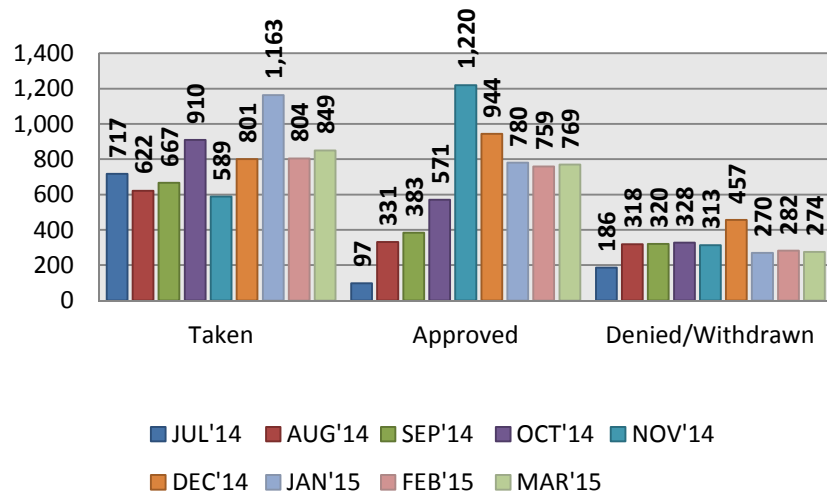


FY 2014-2015 – 175 Decreases Requested

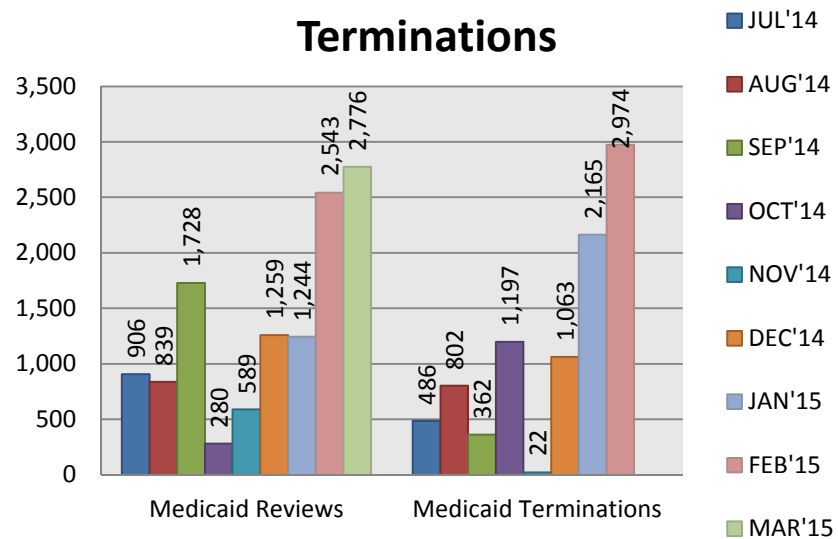


Economic Services Data Dashboard -2014-2015 Fiscal Year

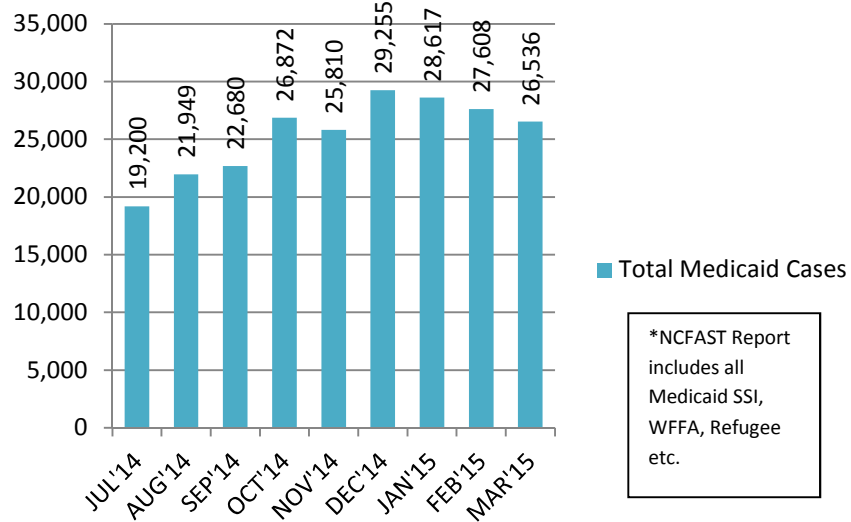
Medicaid Applications



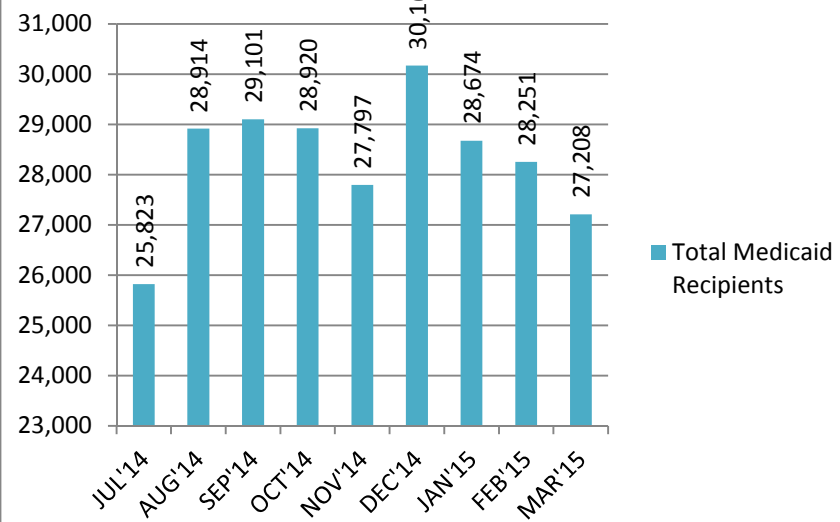
Medicaid Reviews and Terminations



Total Medicaid Cases

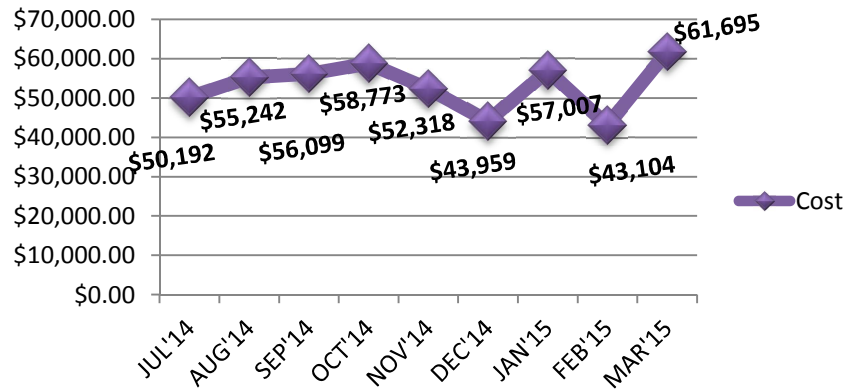


Total Medicaid Recipients

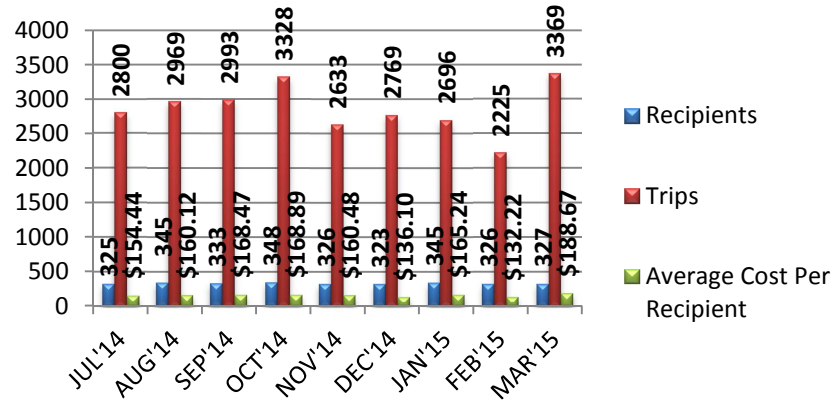


Economic Services Data Dashboard -2014-2015 Fiscal Year

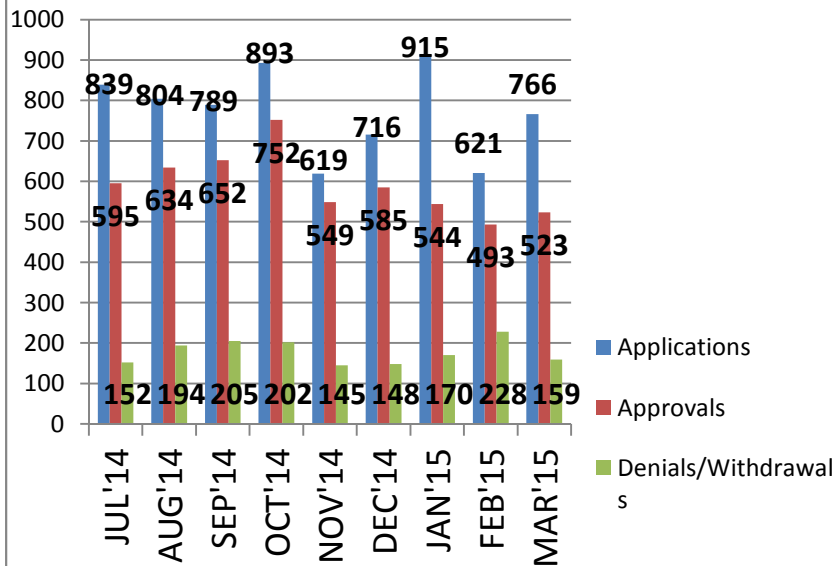
Medicaid Transportation Total Cost



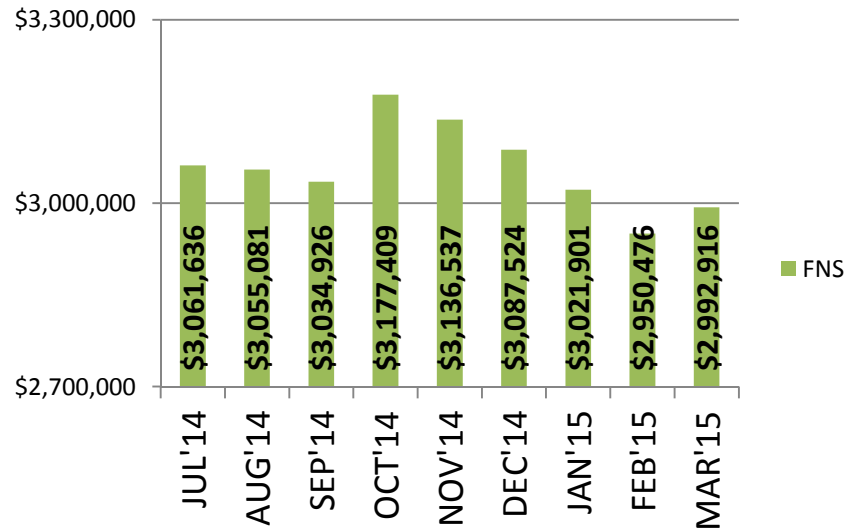
Medicaid Transportation Average Cost Per Recipient



FNS Applications

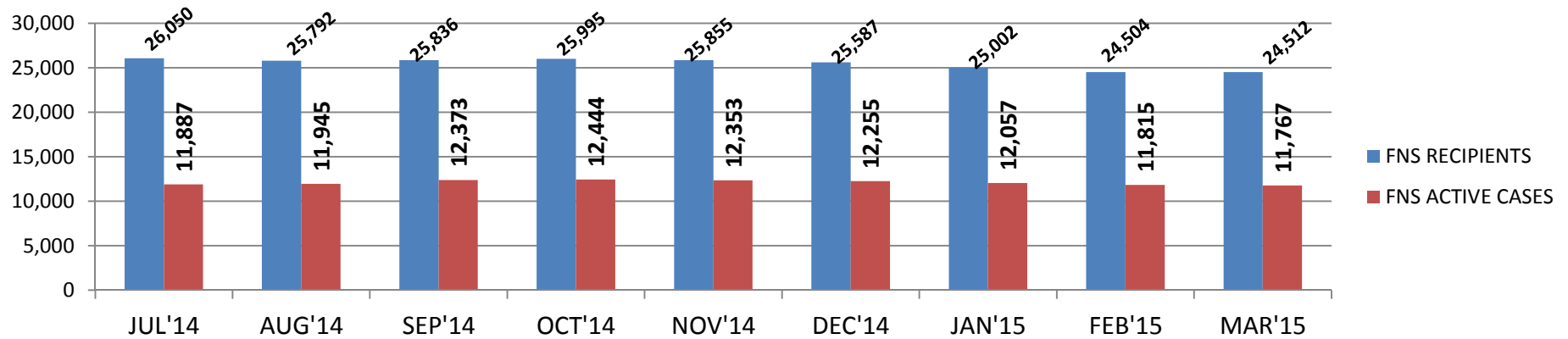


FNS Benefits Issued

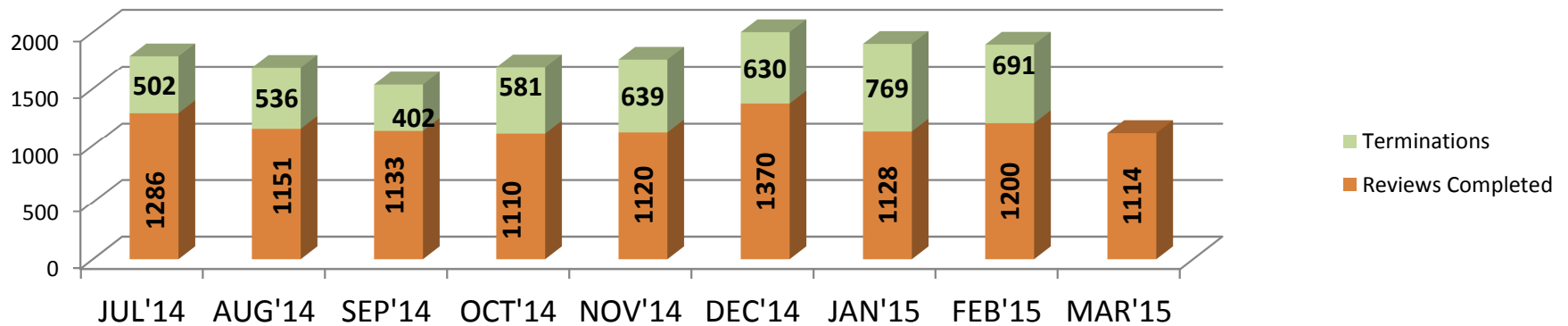


Economic Services Data Dashboard -2014-2015 Fiscal Year

FNS Recipients and Active Cases



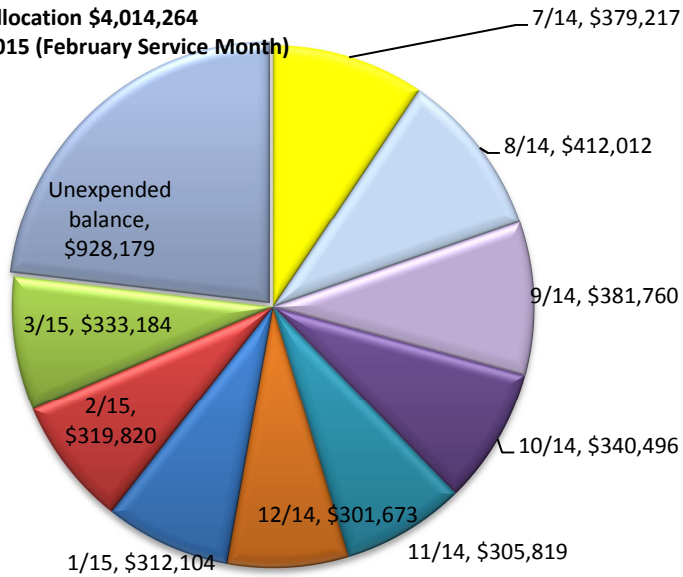
FNS Reviews



Economic Services Data Dashboard -2014-2015 Fiscal Year

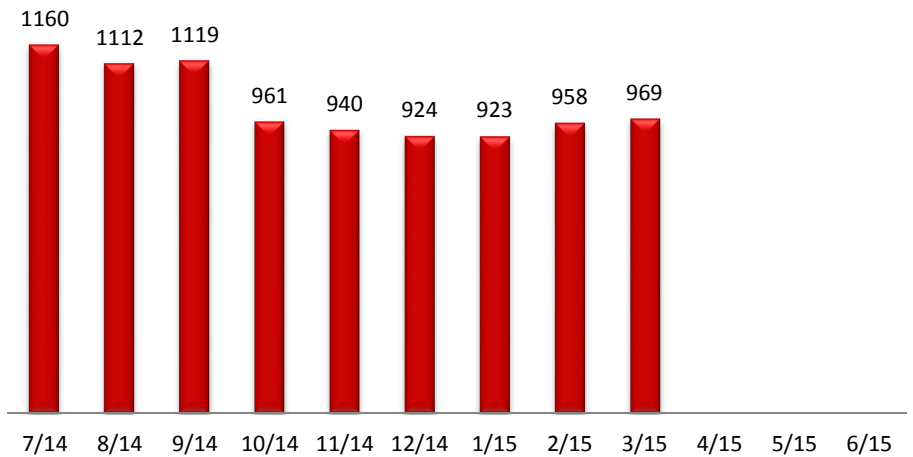
Child Daycare

Yearly Allocation \$4,014,264
Through March 2015 (February Service Month)

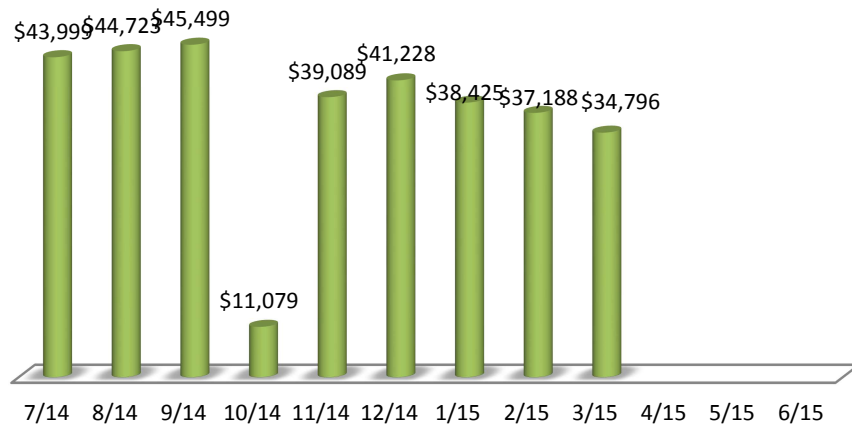


Child Daycare

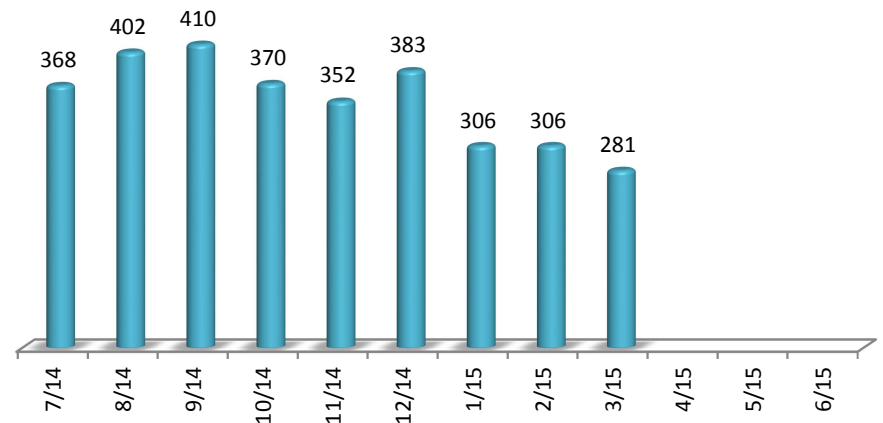
Monthly Total of All Children Served



Work First Benefits Issued

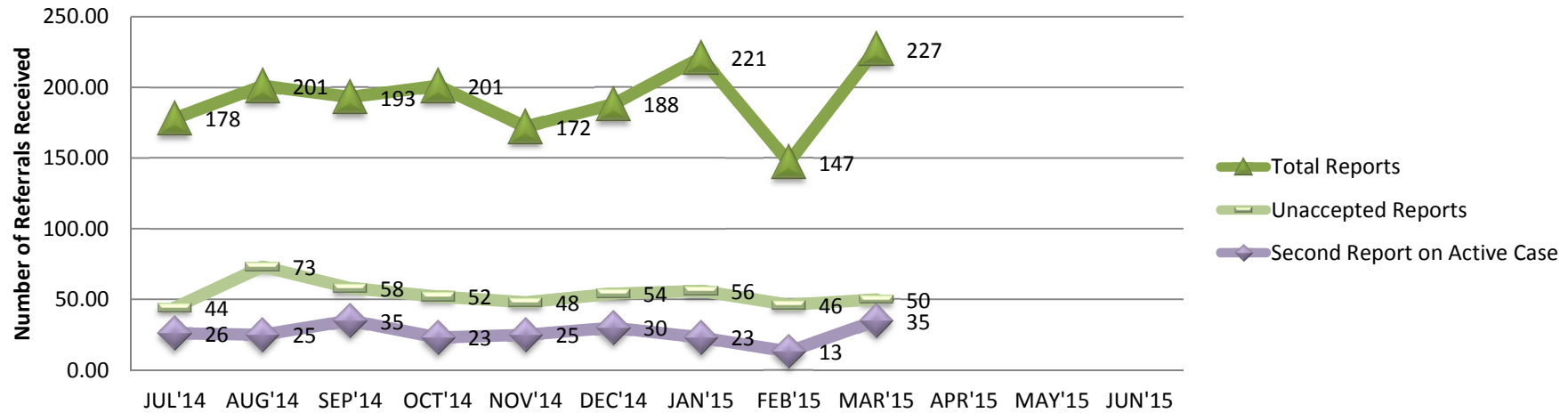


Work First Recipients

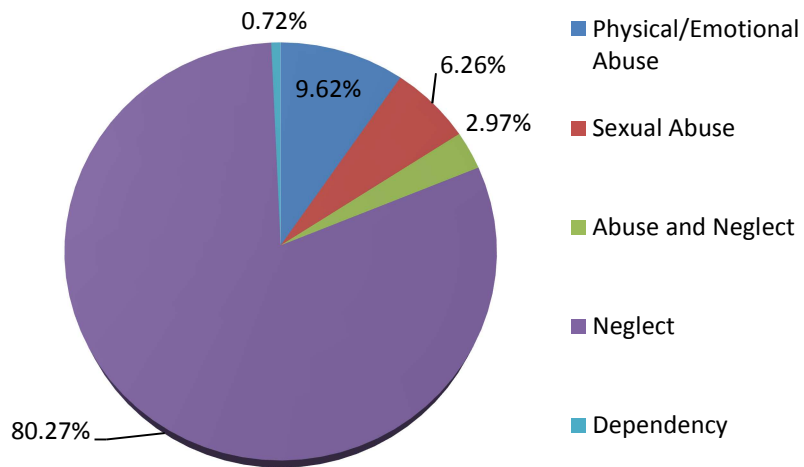


Social Work Services Data Dashboard

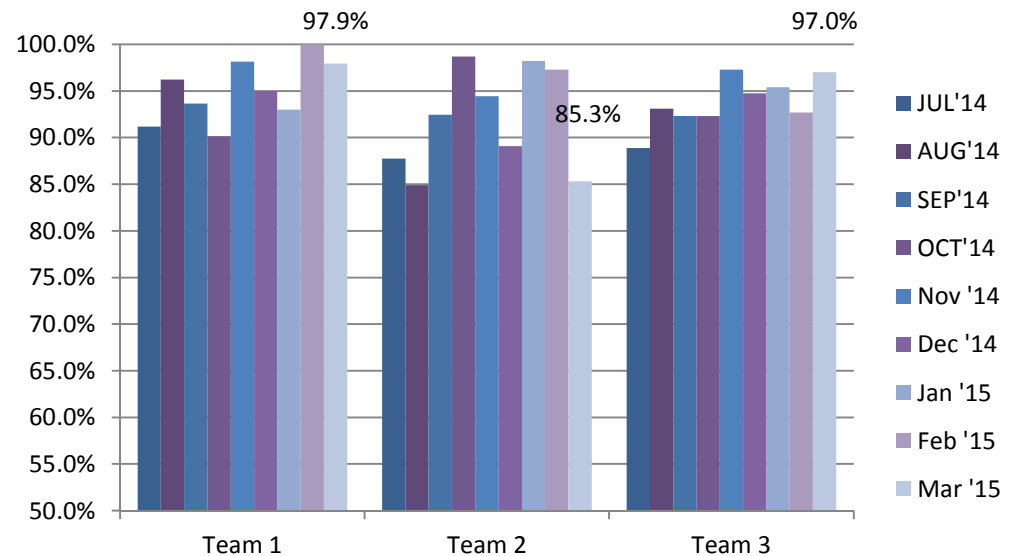
CPS Intake Reports



Accepted CPS Intake Reports by Type FY'14-15

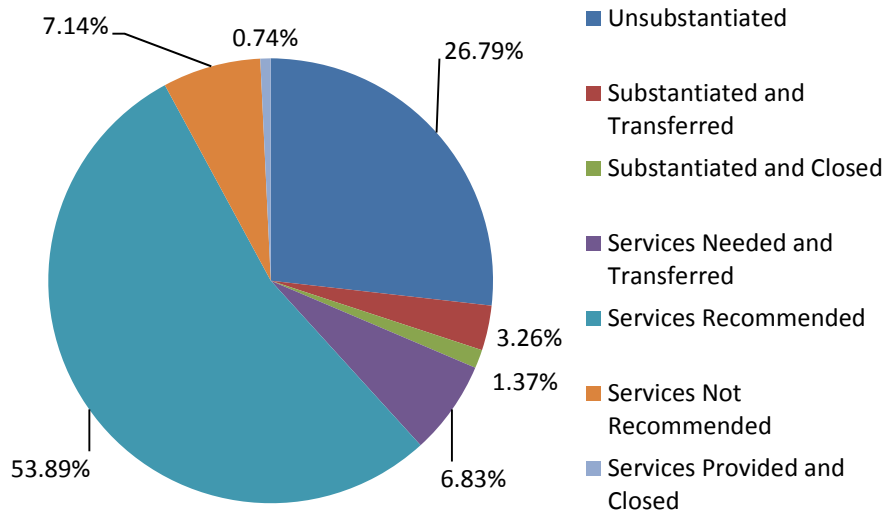


Initiation Rates by Team Jul '14 to Mar '15

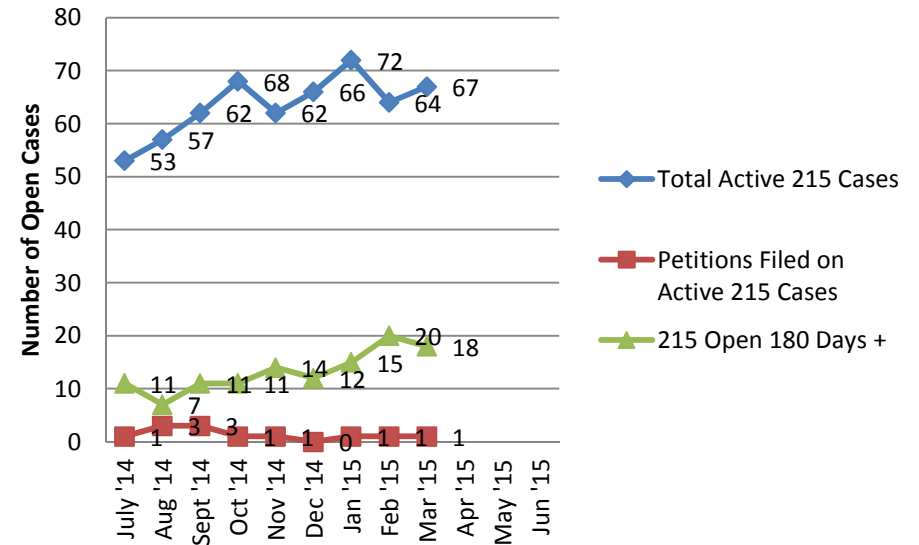


Social Work Services Data Dashboard

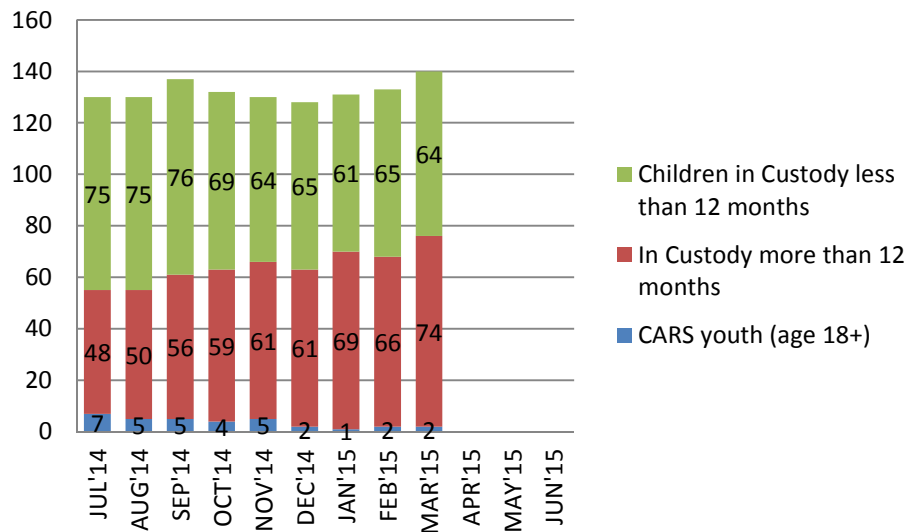
CPS Findings FY '14-'15



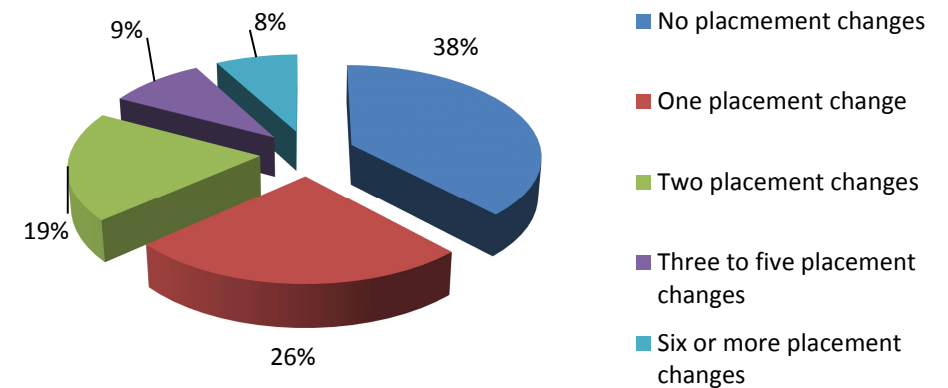
In Home Services



Number of Children in Foster Care

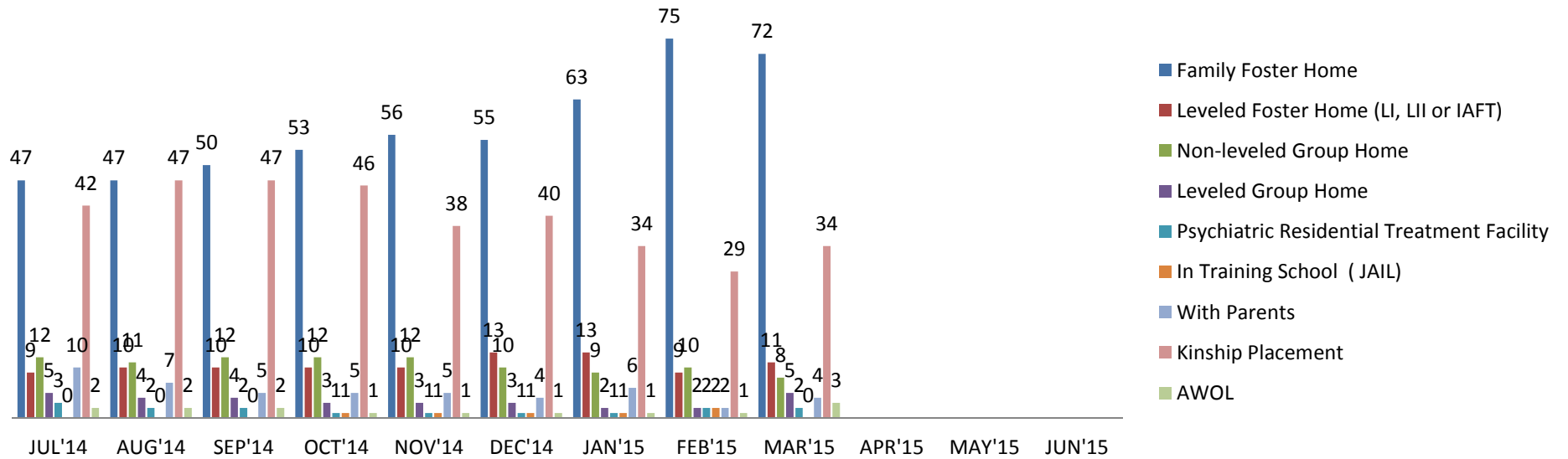


Number of Placement Changes Per Youth in Foster Care FY' 14-15

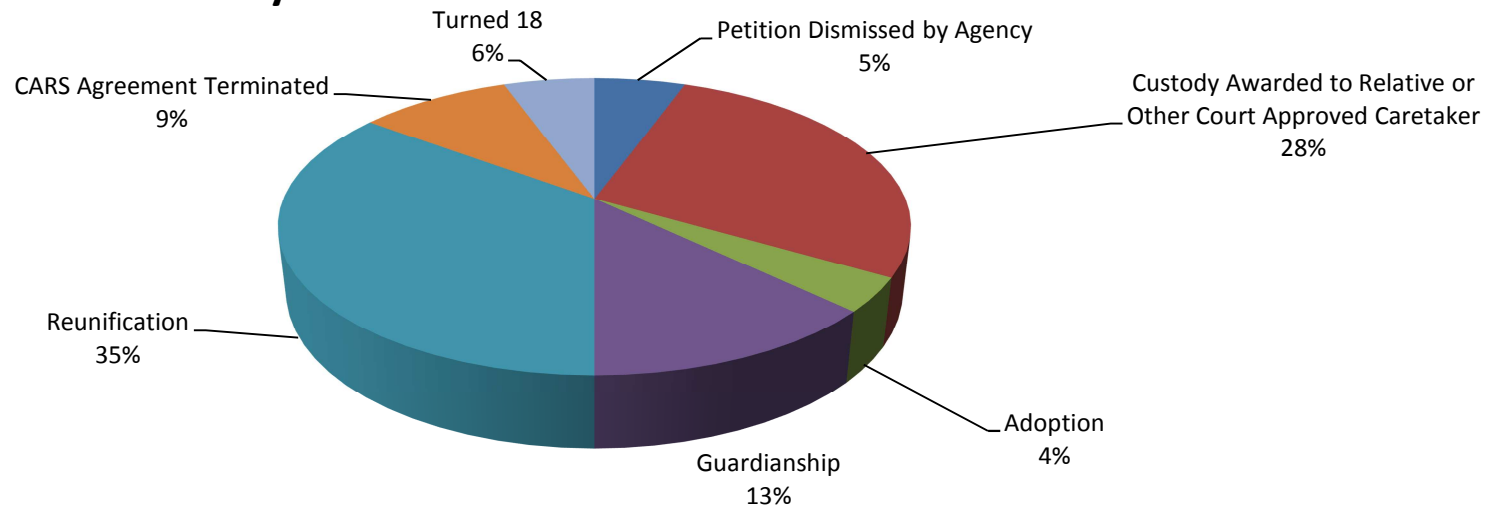


Social Work Services Data Dashboard

Foster Children's Placement Type FY '14/15

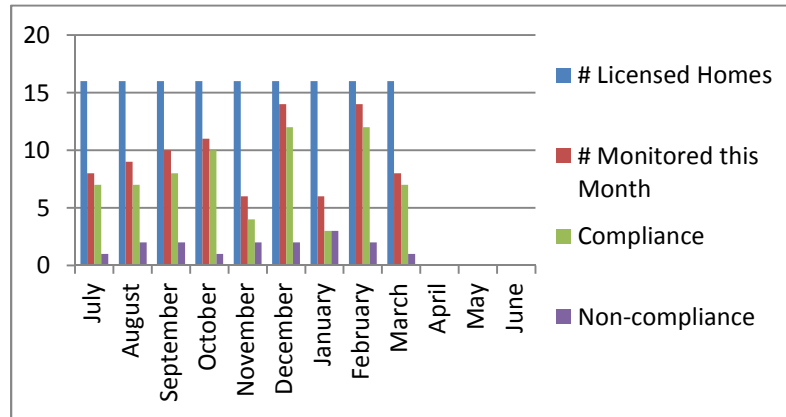


Permanency Outcomes for Foster Children FY'14-FY'15

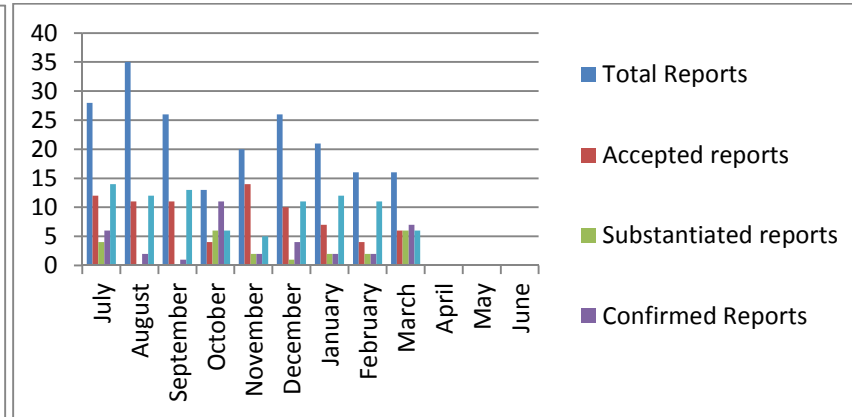


Social Work Services Data Dashboard

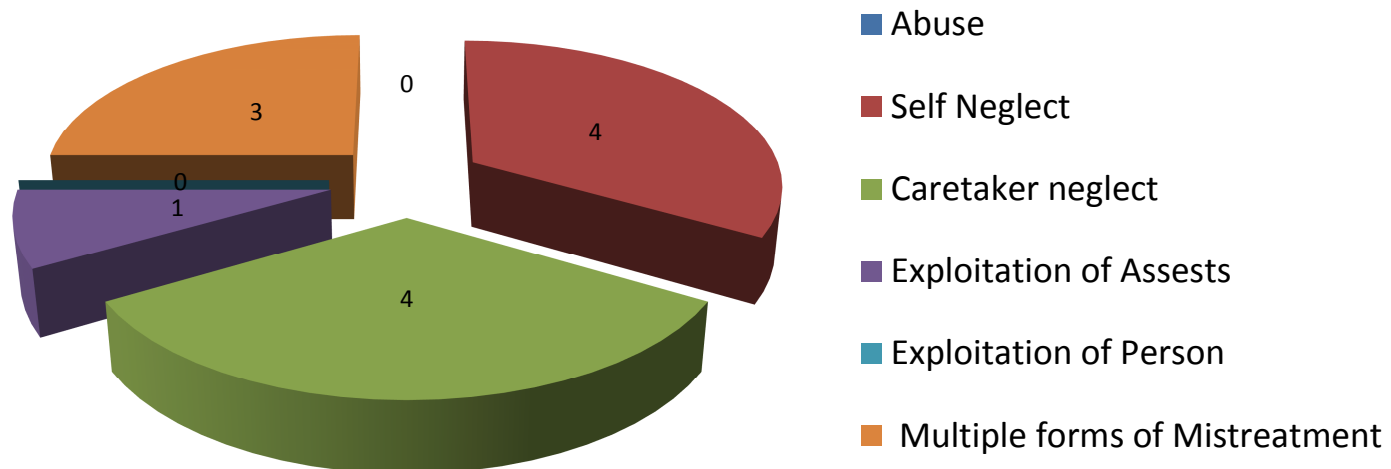
Adult Care Homes Monitored



Adult Protective Services

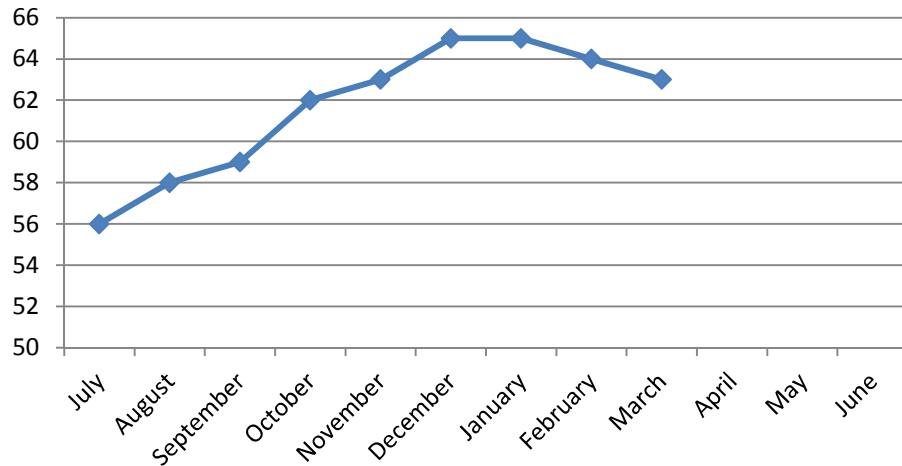


Adult Protective Services Reports

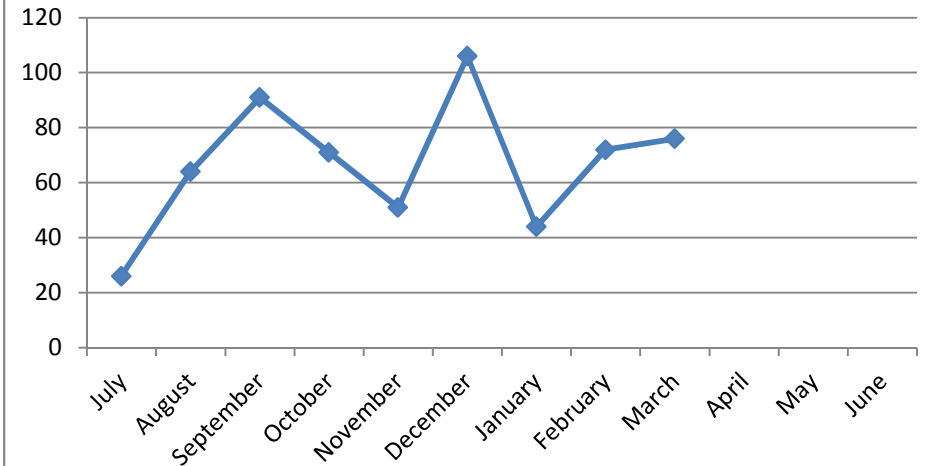


Social Work Services Data Dashboard

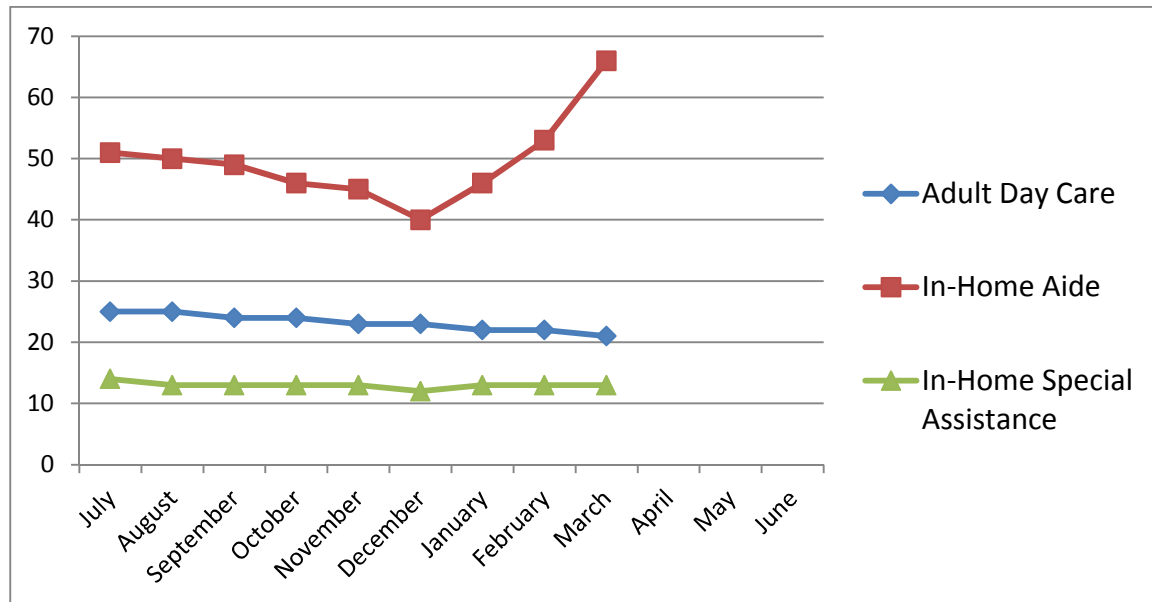
Guardianship Cases



Information and Referral



Services Provided



ITEM TITLE: Director's Report

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Director's Report	4/23/2015	Cover Memo
NCACDSS Children's Services Committee Report	4/23/2015	Cover Memo

Director's Report April 2015

Personnel Changes:

New hires: April Eason-replaced Stephanie Barber

Promotions: Felicia Walker-replaced Jessica DeBoe-from Leadworker to SWSII (Child Day Care)

Transfers: Karen Cauble-replaced Sue Pfannes-IMCIII Leadworker
Brandy Frick-replaced Lauren Alexander-IMCIII to IMCIII Leadworker

Resignations: Elizabeth Spells-resigned-Custodian—accepted position at Dan Nicholas Park
Lauren Alexander-resigned-IMCIII Leadworker
Ebony Rivers-resigned-OAIII
Ashley Goldston-resigned-IMCII

Community Development

On April 2nd, DSS met with Yusuf Muhammad, president and CEO of A New Beginning 2, a community development corporation whose mission is to create community and economic development opportunities for residents of the East Spencer and Rowan County area. According to their website, the organization desires to establish effective programs to address the lack of small business ownership, inadequate housing, and economic opportunities for residents of low wealth communities. Mr. Muhammad reports that he is working with the USDA and DHHS. He received a resolution from the Rowan Board of Commissioners and requested a letter of support from DSS as he is required to assist with Work First recipients in creating jobs and resource development as a condition of a grant for which he has applied. A letter was supplied.

Directors' legal training

The UNC School of Government provides a one day legal training for DSS Directors annually. This year's session on April 7th covered the following topics:

- Guardianship and the restoration of competency
- Human Resources Grievance procedures
- Minor's authority to consent to health care
- Director's Authority to consent to health care
- End of life decision-making
- Accessing Records in Financial Exploitation cases

As Micah Ennis is transitioning to a new role of Social Work Program Manager who will be responsible for oversight of the Adult Services team, she attended with me as a professional development opportunity.

NCACDSS Annual Meeting

April has been a busy month! The Directors' Association annual meeting occurred April 15-17th. It was a work filled event combining the annual and strategic planning meetings. As one of the Tri-chairs for Children's Services Committee, I was responsible for compiling a report of accomplishments, priority identification for next year, action plans to address the issues and critical data points to guide statewide practice. A copy of report is attached.

The Directors worked on the following items during our work sessions:

- Priority based budgeting
- Membership Structure – consideration of aligning our association with our consortium partners from North Carolina Social Services Association (NCSSA) and North Carolina Association of County Boards of Social Services (NCACBSS).
- Communication – increasing effective communication with the various state divisions and across all 100 counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee tribe
- Professional Development – included recommendations for minimum qualifications of Social Services Directors, proposed changes to classification of Income Maintenance Caseworker positions and restructuring of the Professional Capacity and Personnel Committee to enhance leadership development of new directors and succession planning within DSSes.
- Legislative Updates of all pending legislation that could impact local DSSes and counties.
- Action plan development with university partners for building capacity in local DSSes through enhanced training and more internships and placement across the state for BSW and MSW students

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Fayko, M.Ed.

NCACDSS Committees & External Work Groups/Committee/Associations
ANNUAL MEETING REPORT
April 15-17, 2015

NCACDSS Committee or External Group: Children's Services Committee
Tri-Chair or Representative(s): Karen Ellis, Donna Fayko, and Robby Hall
Committee/Work Group Accomplishments for FY 2014-2015
<p>Please list in bullet format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnered with the State Division in presenting three case management practice models to NC Child Welfare professionals • Public/Private Toolkit: Standardized Contract Template for use with Private foster care Providers was introduced. • Strongly advocated with DCDEE to re-evaluate legislative changes to income unit which negatively impacted kinship care providers. • Collaborated with State Division to request standalone Conflict of Interest Policy, set in motion a requirement for counties to begin tracking COI cases on monthly basis and requested State to draft MOA to be used between counties for COI investigations/assessments. • Advocated for a higher level of accountability of counties in following state policy directives and greater oversight by State Division • Coordinated presentation on Time Limited Family Reunification funds and encouraged counties to utilize all available revenue • Facilitated presentation on Project No Rest – a prevention movement to keep foster youth from becoming victims of human trafficking • Engaged presentation from AG's office and State Division on Sex Trafficking Act PL 113-183 and coordinated a policy workgroup to guide "prudent parent standards" for foster parents in approving age appropriate activities for foster youth. • Facilitated statewide contract for NCACDSS and Lexis Nexis Accurint • Requested and obtained training on Medicaid Administrative Claiming. • Provided input into NC CW Education Collaborative Amendments. • Researched alternative case management systems for statewide implementation and advocated for county engagement in the development of the CW module of NCFast. This advocacy led to ground level engagement of counties in identifying and vetting system functions and mobility for the system. • Engaged NC Child Fatality Taskforce in support for statewide case management system for CW • Served on Steering Committee for multi-disciplinary team to research and define Child Well-Being Outcomes and develop recommendations to improve outcomes for foster youth, utilizing resources more effectively

NCACDSS Committee or External Group: Children's Services Committee		
Tri-Chair or Representative(s): Karen Ellis, Donna Fayko and Robby Hall		
From your committee/work group perspective, what are the three (3) most important critical issues facing our Association in 2015-2016?		
Issue	Impact	Suggested Plan of Action
1. Continue building strong collaboration with state division.	<p>a. New initiatives and processes directed by the state division impact practice, caseloads and funding at county level. (e.g., Choice of statewide case practice model will mold casework practice with families and documentation tools used by staff.)</p> <p>b. County practice influences state outcomes.</p> <p>c. Any corrective action from CFSR trickles down to counties.</p>	<p>a. Engage in state level discussions and advocate for strong county partnership in determination of new initiatives and new policy development, including selection of statewide service model to insure that implementation is practical and strategic.</p> <p>b. Preparation and engagement of counties for new CFSR process from day one.</p> <p>c. Joint Development of roles and interactions with new State CPS positions.</p> <p>d. Advocate for statewide implementation of REAP</p>
2. Development of case management system for CW	Critical need for system to be efficient, meet mobility needs of social workers and provide connectivity between counties serving same families	Continue county involvement in system development. Require and advocate for in-depth usability testing prior to roll out.
3. Potential federal budget cuts to SSBG http://www.nationalchildabusecoalition.org/social-services-block-grant-sign-on-letter.html	Reduction of one of the primary revenue streams for CPS could reduce number of staff available to effectively investigate and assess reports of child abuse and neglect, thereby reducing safety to children.	Strong advocacy effort opposing potential budget cuts to SSBG
4. Growth in foster care population including youth age 19-21. Children in DSS custody do not have timely access to appropriate mental health services .	Potential unfunded mandates for counties, inadequate treatment interventions and placements for foster youth, expansion of CARS.	Explore underlying issues of growth in foster care, collaborate with community partners to address needs of these youths and families, seek funding for families receiving in-home services, advocate for utilization of Evidence-based practices. Develop and grow transitional living programs for foster youth 18+.

NCACDSS Committee or External Group: Children's Services Committee		
Tri-Chair or Representative(s): Karen Ellis, Donna Fayko and Robby Hall		
NCACDSS Strategic Plan		
In reviewing the strategic goals, which outcomes can your committee assist in achieving?	Committee's Plan of Action	Projected Timeframe
#2 – Improve best practices, performance, and measurable outcomes of public social services and member agencies.	Research and share child welfare best practice models with NCACDSS; develop task forces and policy workgroups to collaborate with NCDHHS; engage university partners to share research findings and to serve on workgroups; disseminate information to counties	July 2017
#3-Create and maintain effective and strategic partnerships.	Continued partnership with NCDHHS on implementation of all new programs and new initiatives; monthly conference calls to plan and strategize on Children's Services Committee agendas; joint work on external committees that impact daily operations of county DSSes.	On-going
#5-Achieve a public social services system that is characterized by programs and policies that further our mission, vision and values that are aligned with our intended goals, indicators and performance measures.	Continued partnership with NCDHHS on implementation of all new programs and new initiatives; engagement of committee members of Children's Services Committee to identify topics and issues to address via collaboration with DHHS; research and publish white papers on key topics.	Biannually (resource issue)

NCACDSS Committee or External Group: Children's Services Committee	
Tri-Chair or Representative(s): Karen Ellis, Donna Fayko, and Robby Hall	
County Data Overview	
What are the three (3) most important data measurements your committee would like to see from a county, regional and state perspective?	Data Source
1. Length of time in foster care (including reason of entry or major risk factor)	Data warehouse currently NCFAST Child Welfare module in future?
2. Permanency outcomes	Data warehouse, NC School of SW website
3. Child well-being outcomes, including access level and delivery of mental health services (trauma informed, evidence-based) to children during 210, 215, and 109 services	Not currently available. Need to build interface between child welfare and mental health. http://www.nciom.org/task-forces-and-projects/?e4c

ITEM TITLE: Agency Calendar

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Agency Calendar May

Upload Date

4/23/2015

Type

Cover Memo

May 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Pay Day Day Care 8:00 CSLT 9:00 ESD Superv. 10:00	2
3	4 Adult Svcs 8:30 In-Home Mtg 10:00	5 Peer Review 9:00 CCPT 12:30 Community Room MAPP 6:00	6 APS Screening 8:30	7 SOC Training 9:00 PFE 2:00	8 Time Sheets due CSLT 9:00 SOC Training 9:00 ESD Superv. 10:00	9
10	11	12 Out of Home Mtg. 8:00 Peer Review 9:00 Automation Comm. 10:00	13 NCSSA 8:15	14 SOC Mtg. 9:00	15 Pay Day APS Screening 8:30 CSLT 9:00 ESD Superv. 10:00 DSS Empl. Apprec. Lunch 12 - 2 Ag. Ctr	16
17	18 Travel due to Donna P. In-Home Mtg. 10:00 Innovative Approaches 10:00	19 Peer Review 9:00 LEPC 9:30 RPL	20 SOC Collab. 2:00 LINKS 3:30	21 Time Sheets due ESD Star Team 9:00	22 Time Sheets keyed Children's Svcs Div Mtg. 9:00 ESD Superv. 10:00	23
24	25  Memorial Day Holiday	26 Peer Review 9:00 DSS Board 5:30	27 Co. Employee Health Fair Leadership Acad. 9:00 Adoptions Comm. 2:00	28 Econ Svcs. 9:00	29 Pay Day Travel Cks. Dist. CSLT 9:00 ESD Superv. 10:00 Co. Apprec. Lunch Masonic Lodge 12-2	30

31

Consider bringing a canned good on payday Fridays to support DSS food pantry

Parking Space Winner - Lindsey Schmeltzer

Compatibility Report for Calendar.xls

Run on 10/27/2011 17:00

The following features in this workbook are not supported by earlier versions of Excel. These features may be lost or degraded when you save this workbook in an earlier file format.

Minor loss of fidelity

of occurrences

Some cells or styles in this workbook contain formatting that is not supported by the selected file format. These formats will be converted to the closest format available.
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1

ITEM TITLE: Foster Parent Newsletter

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Foster Parent Newsletter

Upload Date

4/23/2015

Type

Cover Memo



Donna F. Fayko, Director
1813 East Innes Street. Salisbury NC 28146
Telephone: 704-216-8330. Fax: 704-638-3041
<http://www.rowancountync.gov/dss/mainpages>
May 2015

Dear Foster Parents,

May is National Foster Care Month, a time to recognize the role that each of us play in the lives of children and youth. This is also a time for us to promote the work that we all do daily and recruit others to partner with us. To celebrate you, I will have some treats for you at the May Foster Parent Association Meeting. The agency values you and all that you do for Rowan County's children and youth. Thanks to Heather Weber for representing our foster parents at the Prevent Child Abuse Rowan event in April.

The article for this month deals with a different kind of partnership, partnering with older youth to bring about permanence for them through the Child and Family Team (CFT) process.

- **No Foster Parent In-service in May due to the Memorial Day holiday! Have a fun and safe holiday!**
- Board checks will be mailed out on May 15, 2015.
- One of the requirements of maintaining your foster homes is that you must be willing to participate in Shared Parenting, which means working with the families of children placed in your home if your supervising agency determines this is appropriate.

The "One Church One Child" Assistance Center at Main Street United Methodist Church at 1312 North Main St. in Salisbury will be OPEN from 9 am to 11 am and 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm on these dates in May: Monday May 4, Thursday May 7, Monday May 11, Thursday May 14,, Monday May 18, Thursday May 21, and Thursday May 28. The center will be CLOSED on Monday May 25 for the Memorial Day holiday. Items available to foster families include children's clothes of all sizes, shoes, socks and underwear, baby items, toys, school supplies, and diapers and you are welcome to anything you can use for foster children in your home. Jon Hunter will be there most of the time, and there will be volunteers as well to help you. Bring your Foster Parent ID card with you (or they can look up your name on our list of foster parents). You will need to give Jon or the volunteer the name of the foster child (ren) the items are for.

And as always, thank you for ALL you do every day for our children.

Wendy J

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Life Books: Sources of Healing and Strength Long Past Age 18

By Donna Foster

Recently my 38-year-old daughter, Shannon, and her 8-year-old, Cheyenne, sat with me to look through Shannon's baby book. Then I grabbed albums crammed with photos, school report cards, birth certificates, and other mementos. With each photo, floods of memories surfaced. We laughed and cried. Cheyenne would say things like, "I like to do that too, mom!" and "We're a lot alike."

It was wonderful. Not only did I share what I remembered from those earlier days, but I learned more about my daughter and the memories she held close to her heart. Cheyenne learned about her mom and her grandmother. In just a few hours, our bond grew stronger.

Life Books: Tools for Survival

This experience deepened my belief that life books are critically important for young people who are in foster care or who have been adopted. Life books are more than photo albums. They provide physical evidence for things many of us take for granted. They help prove the child was and is loved. By including the people who were and are in their lives, life books help young people make sense of why they are living in their present family.

Many children in foster care have been traumatized. Their self-concept is low. They don't feel lovable, capable, or safe. Yes, they need food, shelter, clothing, education, and safety. But to survive, grow, and build a future they need more than that.

I loved every child who came to live with us for the 17 years we fostered. I still love them. One youth challenged me by asking, "How can you love me if you don't know me?"

His question made me realize that helping a child reconnect to his past and understand his value in his present life is as important to his survival as food and shelter. Without this, we can't prepare a child for his future.

Laying a Foundation

Years ago I was a counselor in a residential center (group home) for kids in foster care. As we were doing life books, some of the older youth resisted the idea of telling their life stories for their life books. They were comfortable talking about what they liked to do and who their present best friends were, but they didn't want to talk about the past.

I didn't push them. Instead, I started taking photos of them with the other youth and adults around them. We logged pages and pages with trips to the mountains, camping, and squirting water on each other while washing cars. This felt safe for them.

Eventually I learned that as soon as a youth came to live at the residential home or with my family, I needed to connect with their parents and siblings. I listened as their birth family shared life experiences. Some were happy. Many were painful.

But it was so helpful. Connecting with families helped me to know the youth better. My compassion and understanding for the youth's parents made life easier for the youth.

We must let the youth know their parents are more than what happened that led to foster care. The older the child becomes, the more they see the needs of their parents.

Whenever possible, I wanted them to feel their parents parenting them, even if it was in a simple way. Photos of them cooking together or talking on a park bench can give the youth a lifetime of fond memories. Photos like these--and the memories that go with them--can help them through tough times as an adult.

Making Meaningful Connections

As trust developed between me and a youth, they started telling me about people they missed in their lives. I felt my job was to talk to the youth's case worker and search out these people who meant a lot to the youth.

With the agency's approval, I found teachers, old neighbors, school bus drivers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and many more people excited to be in the youth's life again. A youth can become more whole if people from his past reenter his life.

<http://www.fosteringperspectives.org/fpv19n1/lifebooks.htm>

ITEM TITLE: Role of a Child Support Agent

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
No Attachments Available		

ITEM TITLE: In-depth review of Child Support Dashboard

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
No Attachments Available		